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BUSINESS | Page 1

Energy sector played decisive role in advancing Qatar's economic growth: Al-Attiyah

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TUESDAY Vol. XXXIV No. 12653

May 23, 2023

Dhul-Qa'da 3, 1444 AH

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120 exhibitors from 25 countries to participate in Project Qatar

The 19th edition of Project Qatar, the nation's largest and most prominent construction exhibition, will be held from May 29 to June 1 at the Doha Exhibition and Convention Centre, it was announced yesterday. The event will bring together 120 international exhibitors from 25 countries and feature eight official country pavilions and 200 local companies, led by major governmental and semi-governmental companies and prominent private sector companies in Qatar. This year's event will be held under the patronage of HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani, with the support of Ministry of Commerce and Industry and in partnership with Public Works Authority (Ashghal). **Business Page 1**

MoPH approves HPV vaccine

The Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) has introduced the human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine among the list of approved vaccines in Qatar, as an optional vaccine. The introduction of the vaccine comes within the framework of the ministry's strategy to protect community members from cervical cancer. The vaccine will be provided free of charge at all Primary Health Care Corporation centres and the Communicable Disease Center. **Page 11**

Pentagon blast fake image goes viral

A fake image of an explosion at the Pentagon briefly went viral and caused a ten-minute long dip on the markets yesterday, stoking further talk that generative AI could cause problems to society. The image, which many observers suspected came from artificial intelligence, was spread by several accounts, forcing the Pentagon to comment that there was no such explosion. "We can confirm this was a false report and the Pentagon was not attacked today," a spokesman said.

19 youths die in Guyana school dormitory fire

At least 19 youths were killed and several injured in a school dormitory blaze in Guyana, the tiny South American country's fire brigade said yesterday. It is not yet known how the fire started Sunday in a dormitory of Mahdia Secondary School housing girls aged 11-12 and 16-17. The building was entirely gutted by the inferno.

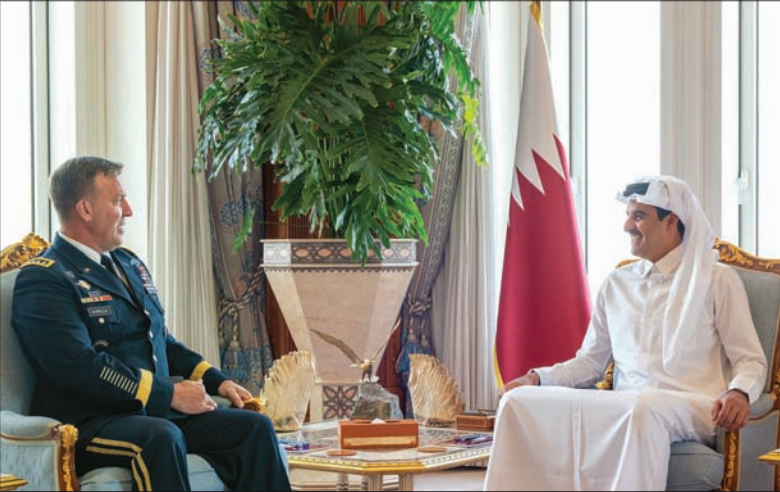
US, PG sign defence pact at Pacific summit

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said a defence co-operation pact signed with Papua New Guinea yesterday would expand the Pacific island nation's capabilities and make it easier for the US military to train with its forces. Blinken and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi held separate meetings with 14 Pacific island leaders in the PNG capital Port Moresby, pledging support for the region's priorities of health, development and climate change.

Tim Scott launches US presidential bid

Tim Scott, the only Black Republican in the US Senate, formally kicked off his 2024 presidential campaign yesterday, betting his upbeat message will sell in a party in which many voters are still firmly behind former President Donald Trump.

Amir meets commander of US Centcom

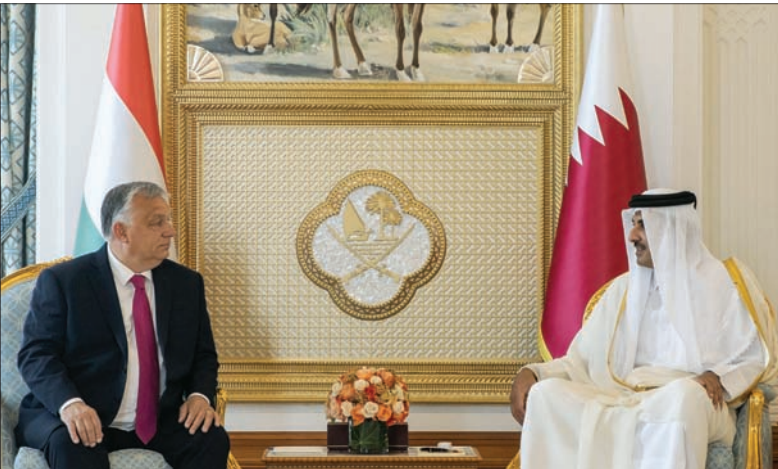


His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani met yesterday at the Amiri Diwan with Commander of United States Central Command General Michael Kurilla, and the accompanying delegation, on the occasion of their visit to the country. During the meeting, the two sides discussed the strategic relations between the two friendly countries, and prospects to develop and strengthen them in the fields of military and defence co-operation, in addition to exchanging views on the most prominent regional and international developments. **(QNA)**

Amir, Hungarian PM discuss economy and investment

QNA
Doha

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani and Prime Minister of Hungary Viktor Orban held an official talks session yesterday at the Amiri Diwan. During the session, they discussed aspects of developing joint co-operation between the two countries, especially in the fields of economy and investment, in addition to exchanging views on the most substantial regional and international developments of common interest. **To Page 2**



New Google Cloud region opened in Doha

By Peter Alagos
Business Reporter

Google Cloud officially opened its new Doha Cloud region in a ceremony held at the Qatar National Convention Centre (QNCC) yesterday. Google Cloud officials led the launch ceremony in the presence of HE the Minister of Communications and Information Technology Mohamed bin Ali al-Mannai and HE the Minister of State and Chairman of Qatar Free Zones Authority (QFZA) Ahmad al-Sayed. The new cloud region will meet the growing demand for cloud services in Qatar and the Middle East region and support Qatar National Vision 2030, which aims to transform the country into a digital economy through innovation and digital transformation. Research commissioned by Google Cloud and conducted by Access Partnership stated that the new Doha cloud region is expected to drive increased economic activity and is estimated to contribute a cumulative \$18.9bn in higher gross economic output to Qatar's economy between 2023 and 2030 and support the creation of 25,000 jobs in 2030 alone. This new cloud region is the latest significant investment made by Google Cloud in Qatar, following the



Qatari ministers and Google Cloud officials during the ceremonial opening of the new Doha cloud region. **PICTURES:** Shaji Kayamkulam

recent opening of a country office and virtual Centre of Excellence (CoE) in Msheireb. The series of investments in infrastructure and resources demonstrates Google Cloud's continued commit-

ment to playing a pivotal role in advancing Qatar's digital future and technological capabilities. The Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT) and the Qatari government have

helped enable the growth of the cloud across the government through the adoption of cloud policies, which facilitated Google Cloud's market entry. Al-Mannai said: "The launch of the first Google Cloud region in Qatar fits



A performer dazzles the audience during the launch ceremony.

into our comprehensive vision to achieve the desired goals of Qatar National Vision 2030, including the establishment of a strong digital infrastructure with internationally agreed standards and policies that will lead us all towards a more efficient economy based on digitalisation and technology to facilitate quality of life and provide convenient solutions for various sectors. "The new cloud region will contribute to giving impetus to economic and productivity growth, and will allow various government and private companies and institutions within Qatar the opportunity to achieve significant efficiency gains by adopting flexible features in dealing with digital technology." **To Page 12**

Whale Shark Conservation Forum 2023 kicks off



The Qatar Whale Shark Conservation Forum 2023, organised by the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change in partnership with the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (Unesco), kicked off yesterday at the Aquatic Fisheries Research Centre in Ras Matbakh, north of Qatar. In his speech during the forum's opening, HE the Minister of Environment and Climate Change Sheikh Dr Faleh bin Nasser bin Ahmed bin Ali al-Thani said the forum's organisation was based on the ministry's responsibilities with the international community in protecting the environment. **Page 5**

QEF begins today to explore 'A New Global Growth Story'

The third 'Qatar Economic Forum', powered by Bloomberg' will kick-off today, bringing in more than 1,000 global business leaders at the iconic towers in Lusail Marina District, home to the Fairmont and Raffles Hotels. The three-day forum will explore the latest trends in finance, energy, healthcare, and technology, and examine their potential to drive future growth. It will feature more than 50 regional and international speakers from the worlds of government, finance, and business. The first day of the conference includes interviews with HE Saad bin Sherida al-Kaabi, Minister of State for Energy Affairs, Qatar; HE Akbar al-Baker, Group Chief Executive Officer, Qatar Airways; Paul Kagame, President of Rwanda; Steven T Mnuchin, 77th Secretary of the Treasury of the US; Kristalina Georgieva, Managing Director, International Monetary Fund; David L Calhoun,

QATAR ECONOMIC FORUM

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Doha, Qatar

President and Chief Executive Officer, The Boeing Company; Shou Chew, Chief Executive Officer, TikTok; Jeff Koons, Artist; and Peter Smith, co-founder and Chief Executive Officer, Blockchain.com.

Shura reviews report on Qataris’ reluctance to join teaching career

QNA
Doha

The Shura Council held its weekly meeting yesterday at Tamim bin Hamad Hall under the chairpersonship of HE the Speaker of the Shura Council Hassan bin Abdullah al-Ghanem.

At the outset of the meeting, the Council hailed His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani’s participation in the 32nd regular session of the Arab League Council at the summit level, which was held in Jeddah last Friday, hoping that the summit contributes to strengthening joint Arab action.

The Council condemned the storming and vandalism by irregular armed forces of the Qatari embassy in Khartoum. It also condemned the repeated incursions by Israeli officials into the courtyards of Al Aqsa Mosque, and the participation of a number of Israeli parliamentarians in the flag march.

Afterwards, HE the Secretary-General of the Shura Council Dr Ahmed bin Nasser al-Fadhala read out the agenda of the session. The minutes of the previous session were ratified.

During the session, the Council reviewed the report made by the Cultural and Information Affairs Committee regarding the request for general discussion submitted by a number of Council members in the first session, related to the phenomenon of Qataris’ unwillingness to join the teaching career.

After discussing the report’s conclusion and exchanging views on the reason behind the phenomenon and presenting opin-



The Shura Council in session.

ions for finding solutions to it, the Council decided to submit a proposal to the government on the aforementioned issue.

The proposal included views and suggestions that would contribute to reducing this phenomenon and contribute to finding solutions to this problem, including highlighting the importance of the teacher’s role in society through various media channels and honouring him/her continuously in educational celebrations and events.

In addition, the proposal referred to the desire to remove the administrative and supervisory burdens from the shoulders of the teacher and to be satisfied with the teaching tasks entrusted to him, and to work on developing school leaders from principals, deputies, and co-ordinators in supervision and guidance skills, and to create a co-operative and effective school environment with the teaching staff.

The proposal also included a desire to consider reducing school hours, allowing the teacher to leave at the same time as the students, in addition to providing support and guidance to new teachers and addressing the challenges they face at the beginning of their work. The proposal also referred to amending the teach-

er’s job description by defining a career path and gradation while involving the Educational Guidance Department with the school administration in the evaluation process at a specific rate for each and not linking the teacher’s performance evaluation to the professional licence.

During its series of meetings, the Cultural and Information Affairs Committee hosted HE Undersecretary of the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE) Dr Ibrahim bin Saleh al-Nuaimi, along with a number of senior officials of the ministry to listen to their views on the phenomenon of reluctance to join the teaching career.

In addition, the Council invited HE the Minister of Education and Higher Education, where the members of the Council listened to her response to their questions and the measures taken by the ministry to address the Qatari teachers’ unwillingness to teach.

The Council reviewed a draft law amending some provisions of Law No 19 of 2016 on a unified system for extending insurance protection to military personnel who are citizens of the GCC working in any of the member states other than their home countries.



Amir, Hungary PM discuss economy, investment

From Page 1

HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani, HE the Chief of the Amiri Diwan Sheikh Saoud bin Abdulrahman al-Thani, HE the Minister of Finance Ali bin Ahmed al-Kuwari, HE the Minister of Commerce and Industry Sheikh Mohamed bin Hamad bin Qassim al-Abdullah al-Thani, and a number of senior officials attended the talks.

On the Hungarian side, it was attended by Minister of Economic Development Marton Nagy, Minister of Finance Mihaly Varga, Minister of State and Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Levente Magyar, and a number of members of the official delegation.

His Highness the Amir held a luncheon banquet in honour of the Hungarian prime minister and the accompanying delegation.

Earlier upon his arrival at the Amiri Diwan, the Hungarian prime minister was accorded an official reception.

In a tweet, His Highness the Amir said that the talks with Prime Minister Orban would contribute to promoting the relations between the two friendly countries in different fields.

The Amir welcomed Prime Minister Orban in Doha, expressing happiness with their talk that would contribute to promoting bilateral relations. **(QNA)**

Science, technology education a top priority: official

HE the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE) Dr Ibrahim bin Saleh al-Nuaimi stressed that science and technology education is currently one of Qatar’s priorities, pointing out that the ministry seeks to expand in this vital and important sector for students, according to procedures that are undergoing work.

In a statement to Qatar News Agency (QNA) on the sidelines of the graduation ceremony of the second batch of students of Qatar Science and Technology Secondary School for Boys, he explained that the distinguished education provided by the school is based on the STEM system, which is a specialised programme in the four subjects from which its name is derived, namely: science, technology, engineering and mathematics. It is one of the most important programmes aimed at qualifying students in engineering, medicine and technology to enrol in the best local and international universities, he added.

Dr al-Nuaimi expressed his pride in this outstanding batch of 55 graduates of the school, all of whom have been accepted into prestigious universities in Qatar as well as abroad, extending thanks to the school administration and its teaching staff for their sincere efforts in this regard.

He also congratulated the students for their graduation, wishing them a remarkable academic future to serve their country and society. The STEM educational system qualifies students to gain scientific and practical experiences to enrol in the best universities around the globe, as well as contribute to improving educational outcomes in a better way. Acting Assistant Undersecretary for Higher Education Affairs Dr Khalid al-Ali said that this type of education is currently one of the priorities of Qatar’s educational policy, given the country’s urgent need for graduates in scientific fields.

He congratulated the school administration, teachers, students and their guardians on the outstanding success, wishing that all these efforts would be crowned by joining scholarships, so that these graduates can complete their studies and work on the development and advancement of Qatar.



HE Dr Ibrahim bin Saleh al-Nuaimi



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- Electrical
- Instrumentation and controls
- Process safety
- Environmental
- Water and wastewater

- Project services
- Planning & scheduling
- Cost controls
- Estimation
- Procurement & contracts
- Information management

If you are an experienced professional in any of these disciplines, please come meet our team.

DATE: Saturday, 27th May 2023

TIME: 9 am to 3pm

LOCATION: Wyndham Doha, West Bay

DRESS CODE: Formal

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- Meet & greet with the Worley team.
- Technical and competency-based interviews by our department managers.

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We look forward to seeing you at the event.

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Dukhan Bank unveils personal finance with low profit rate

Dukhan Bank has launched a new personal finance campaign that allows new customers to benefit from a low profit rate of 6% per annum. Dukhan Bank customers can take advantage of the offer to apply for a minimum finance amount of QR200,000 for a period of four years and above. The campaign, which is applicable to new customers only, will provide easy application and quick approval process for clients to avail a unique financing solution. This campaign will run until July 20. Commenting on the campaign, Dukhan Bank Talal Ahmed al-Khaja, chief communications officer said, "We are always keen to provide our valued customers with easily accessible personal finance solution with some of the best rates in the market to assist them in realising their personal goals. "This new campaign is one of our



many innovative ways to reward customers, as well as provide them with best-in-class banking services aimed at meeting their expectations and changing needs." Dukhan Bank also recently launched a new campaign through which customers can benefit from 10% cashback on their

first salary transfer to the bank. Customers can learn more by visiting Dukhan Bank's website on www.dukhanbank.com or calling the Contact Centre on 800 8555. They can also ask the bank's virtual assistant 'Rashid' on the website, mobile app or via WhatsApp on 44100888.



HE the Minister of Labour Dr Ali bin Smaikh al-Marri is representing Qatar at the conference.

Social dialogue key to facing economic challenges: al-Marri

Qatar is participating in the 49th session of the Arab Labour Conference, which began yesterday at the headquarters of the General-Secretariat of the Arab League in Cairo. HE the Minister of Labour Dr Ali bin Smaikh al-Marri is representing Qatar at the conference.

During his speech at the conference, HE Dr al-Marri stressed that the challenges facing the economies of Arab countries confirm the importance of social dialogue and its ability to enhance resilience, highlighting that addressing these issues is a collaborative effort aimed at realising sustainable growth, dependent on the tripartite entities of labour relations – governments, employers, and workers.

He emphasised the importance of leveraging the accomplishments of the Arab Labour Organisation through social dialogue, with the goal of aiding Arab nations' transition to a new system of social dialogue in accordance with Arab and international labour standards.

He also drew attention to the Direc-



HE the Minister of Labour Dr Ali bin Smaikh al-Marri speaking at the conference.

relations for a superior future in the Arab region.

He noted that the Qatar National Vision 2030 constitutes a practical and scientific guide to reach an advanced country capable of achieving sustainable development and the continuation of a decent life for its people and all residents on its land, explaining that the economic and social progress of modern societies is not subject to automatic development, but has become dependent on a long-term process with set goals in advance, whose pillar is clear vision and sound planning.

HE Dr al-Marri indicated that Qatar has achieved comprehensive developments with regard to work environment laws, to achieve basic principles and rights in the field of work and to provide decent work for all, pointing out that improvements in the work environment come within the framework of efforts aimed at developing the legislative structure and taking measures that are compatible with international standards. (QNA)



LuLu donates QR250,000 to Qatar Charity

LuLu Hypermarket Group has presented a donation of QR250,000 to Qatar Charity (QC), a statement said. Demonstrating their support for QC's 'Charity Partner' (CP) programme, the donation was made possible through LuLu Group's annual 'Shop & Donate' initiative, specially launched during the holy month of Ramadan.

The cheque was handed over to Abdulaziz Jassim Hejji, QC's director of Programmes and International Development, by Shaijan M O, regional director of LuLu Hypermarket. The ceremony took place at LuLu Regional Office on D-Ring Road in the presence of Shanavas P M, regional manager of LuLu, and other officials from both sides.

Hejji said CP is the largest programme of QC in the field of social responsibility. The CP trademark is awarded to private companies and

various bodies and institutions under strategic partnerships, according to different conditions, to support the projects implemented by QC globally.

The QC official expressed gratitude to LuLu Group in Qatar for their generous donation. He commended their consistent support for QC's projects and campaigns, as well as their commitment to community service and humanitarian causes through various agreements.

Hejji, called upon all companies and institutions, public and private alike, to fulfil their societal responsibilities, actively engage in community service, and support humanitarian projects.

Dr Mohamad Althaf, director of LuLu Group International, expressed his joy at partnering with QC, enabling LuLu customers to actively contribute to noble humanitarian causes. He recalled that during his travels, he

has witnessed firsthand how QC effectively channels donors' funds to reach those who are truly in need and vulnerable communities worldwide. Dr Althaf commended QC's steadfast dedication to humanitarian and charitable endeavours, establishing them as one of LuLu's foremost partners. He also pledged LuLu's future support to QC's various programmes.

Over the past five years, QC signed several co-operation agreements with LuLu Hypermarket Qatar. The first agreement allows customers to donate when paying bills at various LuLu Hypermarkets to support charitable projects within and outside Qatar.

The second agreement promotes QC's Khair Cards to promote charity among shoppers, while the third agreement involves a co-operation with LuLu's 'Shop & Donate' drive, in addition to the CP agreement.

Qatari-Kosovan parliamentary group meets



The Qatari-Kosovan Parliamentary Friendship Group held yesterday a meeting co-chaired by Shura Council Member and Chairman of the Qatari-Kosovan Parliamentary Friendship Group Dr Ali bin Fetais al-Marri and Member of Kosovo Parliament Gazmend Gjyshtinca, who is visiting Qatar to participate in the 3rd Qatar Economic Forum. The meeting discussed ways to strengthen parliamentary relations between the two countries, in addition to the importance of boosting co-ordination in regional and international parliamentary forums and the importance of exchanging experiences and visits between the two parliaments. (QNA)

D-Ring Road intersection temporary closure

The Public Works Authority (Ashghal) has announced a temporary closure at Fereej Al Ali intersection on D-Ring Road to traffic coming from Al Amir Street, from 11pm on Thursday (May 25) until 10am on Friday (May 26), to complete the construction of a pedestrian bridge connecting New Slatra and Fereej Al Ali. During the closure, road users heading towards Nuaija, Al Hilal and Old Airport through Fereej Al Ali intersection can continue heading straight from Al Amir Street towards Mesaimeer intersection and to Rawdat Al Khail Street, or use C-Ring Road to reach their destination, Ashghal has said.





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Amir congratulates chairman of Yemeni Presidential Leadership Council

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani and His Highness the Deputy Amir Sheikh Abdullah bin Hamad al-Thani sent yesterday cables of congratulations to the Chairman of the Presidential Leadership Council of Yemen Dr Rashad Mohamed al-Alimi on his country's National Day.

HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani also sent a similar cable of congratulations to Prime Minister Dr Maeen Abdulmalik Saeed. (QNA)

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No.	TENDER NUMBER / DESCRIPTION	TENDER ISSUE PERIOD Sunday to Thursday (08.00 am to 01.00 pm)	TENDER FEE (QR)	TENDER BOND (QAR)	TENDER CLOSING DATE
1	LTC/C/RT0/6161/23, CHEMICAL DOSING FOR FIRE WATER SYSTEMS OF RAS LAFFAN TERMINAL OPERATIONS (RLTO), ON CALL-OFF BASIS	23/05/2023 to 12/06/2023	0	400,000/-	19/06/2023

Scope of Work:

- The objective of this CONTRACT is for the provision of supply and dosing of suitable chemicals (biocides/corrosion inhibitors) into the sweet firewater tanks/systems installed in various locations at COMPANY premises in order to adjust and maintain the firewater quality to comply with the agreed specifications.
- CONTRACTOR shall establish the correct dosing quantities and the physical injection thereof into the firewater systems. This includes the supply of related equipment (e.g. Suitable dosing pump with required accessories and utilities, etc.) required to inject the chemicals safely into the firewater systems.
- The Contract shall be for a period of Five (05) years with a sole option for COMPANY to extend for up to Two (02) years.

Bid Validity: Bid should be valid for 180 days from the Tender Closing Date.

Place for Tender Collection and Bid Submission:
ITT document for this tender will be available in Qatargas website under Supplier's tab >Current Open Tenders. The bids shall be submitted through the Qatargas online platform (SMART by GEP).

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Shura Council Speaker meets UK MPs

HE the Speaker of the Shura Council Hassan bin Abdullah al-Ghanem met yesterday with a delegation from the UK parliament, led by MP Alon Kearns, who is president of the Qatar-UK Friendship Association. The delegation is visiting the country to attend the Qatar Economic Forum. During the meeting, HE al-Ghanem welcomed the delegation, and expressed his appreciation with the parliamentary relations between the two countries. For their part, the delegation praised the experience of Qatar in promoting popular participation, and the Shura Council's efforts in this regard. The meeting also discussed issues related to bilateral co-operation and strengthening parliamentary relations. A number of members of the Council attended the meeting. (QNA)



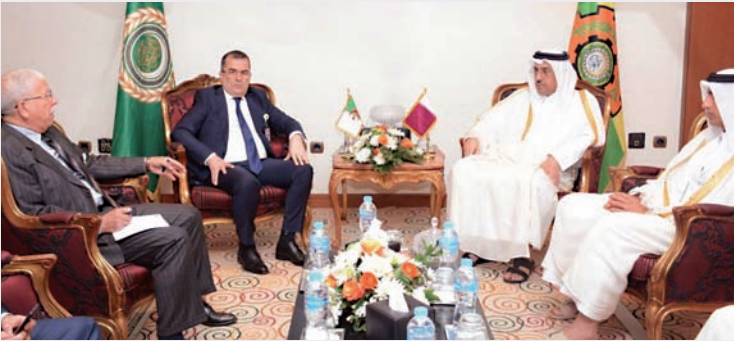
Shura attends meeting of Arab Parliamentary Working Group on technology, innovation

The Shura Council is participating in the high-level meeting of parliamentary working group on technology, innovation and digital transformation of the Arab Parliament in the Moroccan capital, Rabat. The Shura Council is represented by its member Dr Ahmed bin Hamad al-Mohannadi. In his speech, Dr al-Mohannadi emphasised the meeting's significance, and it being an opportunity to learn about Morocco's success in the fields of technology, innovation, and digital transformation. The meeting discussed artificial intelligence (AI)'s positive and negative effects, as well as AI's impact on cybersecurity. (QNA)



Labour minister meets Algerian counterpart

HE Dr Ali bin Saeed bin Smaikh al-Marri, Minister of Labour, yesterday met Algeria's Minister of Labour, Employment and Social Security Faisal bin Taleb on the sidelines of the 49th session of the Arab Labour Conference in the Egyptian capital, Cairo. The meeting comes within the framework of continuous communication between the two brotherly countries and as a continuation of the discussion of executive mechanisms to enhance co-operation, the Ministry of Labour has said in a statement. During the meeting, they examined advancements in the field of labour and explored methods to strengthen and facilitate the exchange of knowledge and expertise between the two nations.



Chief of Staff meets top official of GCC Secretariat General

HE the Chief of Staff of Qatar Armed Forces Staff Lieutenant-General (Pilot) Salem bin Hamad bin Aqeel al-Nabit met with the visiting Assistant Secretary for Military Affairs at GCC Secretariat General, Major General (Pilot) Issa Rashid al-Mohannadi, and his accompanying delegation. During the meeting, issues of common interest were discussed, as well as reviewing of relations and means of boosting them. The meeting was attended by a number of senior officers in the Qatar Armed Forces. (QNA)



QatarDebate Center Announces the launch of “The First International Conference on Debate and Dialogue”

A wide network of researchers, academics, and postgraduates of the global debate community

Doha- QatarDebate
QatarDebate Center announces the organization of an international academic event entitled “The International Conference on Debate and Dialogue” during 29 - 30 May, 2023, at Qatar National Convention Center (QNCC).

This academic gathering reflects the Center's orientation of being based on science, knowledge, studies and research aimed at opening the horizons of cooperation and knowledge development. It is the first edition of the Conference with the participation of researchers, academics and postgraduate students.

It is, hence, an important milestone among the Center's hard working efforts and stands for a leading dialogue forum through which the thoughts of elite researchers and academics are presented to the attendees. Indeed, it is an advanced step towards providing the promising youth cadres with further training experiences on academic research.

The Conference is going to host 80 academics and researchers, in addition to a number of postgraduate students, elite specialists, and members of the fellowship program. The number of attendees is estimated to reach 150. Additionally, the present event will be unique in terms of rich themes and cross-disciplinary topics such as philosophy, education, linguistics and Islamic studies. The Conference will also showcase the value of fellowship, research programs and academic curricula offered by QatarDebate to international universities.

In this context, Mr. Abdulrahman Al-Subaie, Director of Programs at QatarDebate Center, said: “After a journey full of achievements, the Center established a large international pool of researchers interested in the field of debating. So, after these years, it became necessary for the Center to embrace all efforts and unite them by organizing this international conference to bring together experts from international academic institutions as well as participants from the Center's programs: Elite Academy, Fellowship, Path Academy, Ambassadors and others. The Conference, moreover, represents an important opportunity for the Center to highlight its achievements since its establishment in 2008. As a result, relations will be strengthened with many media and



Mr. Abdul Rahman Al-Subaie: “The Conference helps in uniting the efforts of the Center during its journey of remarkable achievements.”

academic entities by signing memorandums of understanding and uniting the efforts exerted to show the impact of the wide interaction taking place in various continents.”

Speakers and Topics
Four speakers are going to participate in the Conference:
Keynote speaker Dr. Rajab Shanturk from Hamad Bin Khalifa University. He will present the theme of debate from the Islamic heritage perspective. Dr. Dima Mohammed from Nafa University in Portugal will present the topic of argumentation in the form of frameworks and applications. The third topic will be presented by Dr. Heba Rauf Ezzat from Ibn Khaldun University in Turkey on dialogue and its cultural and social dimensions, while Dr. Maya Nenadovic from Croatia will present the topic of debate and education.

Exhibition on the Sidelines

of the Conference
In parallel with the Conference, an exhibition will be organized with a layout of three pavilions. The first is dedicated to highlight the achievements and programs developed by the Center recently, in addition to the various projects which were established during the past 15 years, how they were communicated to the world, and what are their objectives; including a national debating team, Elite Academy, Ambassadors, expansion foundations for debate and dialogue, and the local and international tournaments. The second pavilion showcases the research publications participating in the Conference and a detailed explanation of them, while the third pavilion is an interactive space where participants who have had a role in the various programs of the Center during the past years will present their experiences and the impact of debates on their academic and work lives, in addition to honing their skills and the role

of the Center in completing their projects.

Doha Debates
For the first time, a collaboration with Doha Debates will be made by participating in local and international debaters' workshops along with the members of Elite Academy. These workshops are scheduled to target complex and pressing issues suggested by students to be topics of future panel discussions in the upcoming season of Doha Debates.

Oasis of Dialogue
The Conference includes distinguished activities and parallel specialized sessions that conclude with the Oasis of Dialogue under the title: “Social and Familial Relationships”.

Debates in Arabic and English
There are two competitive debates on May 29 in Arabic and English similar to the presi-

dential debates model, where 6 debaters present different opinions on an issue. The debates conclude with questions by the public.

Partners of the Center
Strategic partner: Doha Forum, media partners: Al Jazeera Media Institute and Arab and New Arab TV Network, translation partner: Hamad Bin Khalifa University's Translation and Interpreting Institute. Qatar Airways is the official carrier.

National Debating Team
It is worth mentioning that Qatar will participate in the debates of the Conference, where the students' journey with the Center and the role of the Center in ensuring training and representation of the State locally and globally will be both highlighted.

For more information, please contact:
Khaled Al-Ibrahim: 55834445



Minister highlights Qatar's whale shark preservation initiatives

Qatar Whale Shark Conservation Forum 2023 kicks off

QNA
Doha

The Qatar Whale Shark Conservation Forum 2023, organised by the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change in partnership with the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (Unesco), kicked off yesterday at the Aquatic Fisheries Research Centre in Ras Matbakh, north of Qatar.

Three main sessions are being held at the two-day forum, during which 18 research papers will be presented, with the participation of more than 11 local, regional and international experts and researchers.

The research papers review topics related to preserving the whale shark, the factors affecting its life and some of the risks it faces, and studies of its migration patterns in the seas and oceans. The research presented also included modern technologies used to track its migration patterns.

In his speech during the forum's opening, HE the Minister of Environment and Climate Change Sheikh Dr Faleh bin Nasser bin Ahmed bin Ali al-Thani said the forum's organisation was based on the ministry's responsibilities with the international community in protecting the environment, and as a complement to the State's active role in preserving marine life and the important biodiversity it contains.

He reviewed the country's efforts over the past years, add-



ing Qatar has launched the National Environment and Climate Change Strategy (QNE) 2030, and also prepared the Qatar National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan for the Conservation and Management of Marine Resources, and the preparation of maps of coastal areas and maps of benthic habitats of environmental importance, as well as updating and issuing legislation and laws that protect the marine environment and criminalise harming its biodiversity, in addition to working to increase the area of marine reserves to 30% of the exclusive economic zone of Qatar.

HE the Minister said that as part of Qatar National Vision 2030, especially with regard to the fourth pillar concerned with environmental development, the ministry has conducted research and studies related to biological diversity, including the study that was conducted in 2010, which

included several regions, under the supervision of a group of scientists and specialists, where it documented the intense presence of whale sharks in Qatar, and revealed that the Qatari territorial waters witness one of the largest concentrations of these fish, specifically in the Al-Shaheen field in the northeastern region of the country's waters.

He said on an average there are about 600 whale sharks, pointing out that no higher number has been documented anywhere else in the world. This provided the important infrastructure for developing plans to protect and preserve them in the Qatari territorial waters.

HE the Minister noted the importance of convening such regional forums, which are a platform for consultation between regional and international partners to highlight international efforts to protect marine

biodiversity, transfer knowledge and exchange opinions, ideas and viewpoints through discussion sessions and research papers presented, pointing out that the forum supports the co-ordination of efforts between partners, and contributes to developing a common vision on the most important challenges and risks facing this rare type of whale.

He referred to the importance of joint work to develop solutions and recommendations and take appropriate decisions to protect these species from risks and challenges, in order to preserve whale sharks.

He revealed a study to establish a regional office for the whale shark in Qatar, as part of the country's efforts to preserve the whale shark, and as a continuation of the ministry's efforts that it has been carrying out for years to preserve marine biodiversity in Qatar in a way that contributes



HE the Minister of Environment and Climate Change Sheikh Dr Faleh bin Nasser bin Ahmed bin Ali al-Thani addressing the conference.

to increasing the region's capabilities to protect these fish, and placing them on an ambitious road map with clear landmarks that enhance sustainability efforts among all regional efforts to preserve and protect the living creatures in our territorial waters.

Concluding his speech, HE the Minister of Environment appreciated the efforts of all parties, partners and supporters of the forum, including the Unesco office, Qatar University, Qatar Airways, the Seashore Recycling and Sustainability Company and all participants, expressing his hope that the regional forum would be held annually, to unify efforts and joint action, and to build an effective

strategy to preserve whale sharks in the region.

Programme specialist at the Unesco Office for the GCC and Yemen Farida Aboudan said the forum, which coincided with the International Day for Biological Diversity, is a reminder of the importance of preserving the environment, in a way that guarantees the safety of whale sharks.

She pointed out that whale sharks occupy an important place in the world today, due to their unique characteristics, warning of challenges that threaten their survival, such as the destruction and damage of their important habitats, and the impact of climate change on the marine ecosystem, and the impact of pollution in the

form of plastic waste, chemical runoff, and oil spills.


She noted that the partnership between Unesco and the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change represents a strong platform for exchanging knowledge and sharing best practices, research results and protection strategies with neighbouring countries and abroad.

Concluding her speech, Aboudan affirmed Unesco's appreciation for the ongoing discussions with the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, referring to the organisation's commitment to work to protect the wonderful natural heritage of Qatar, and looking forward to positive results based on this partnership.

At the end of the forum's opening, HE Sheikh Dr Faleh honoured the participating institutions and sponsors.

The Whale Shark Forum addresses several axes, most notably: discussing ways to preserve and develop whale sharks in all participating countries, and identifying the most important challenges facing the endangered fish in general, to determine the best ways to overcome these.

The forum aims to gather stakeholders under one roof to discuss various topics related to whale sharks, raise awareness of the importance of protecting them, enhancing co-operation and partnerships among the participants, and discussing ways to develop a regional strategy for the conservation of whale sharks. (QNA)






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Second edition of ‘Simulation of Shura Council Sessions’ wraps up



The second edition of the “Simulation of the Shura Council Sessions” concluded at the Council’s headquarters in the presence of HE the Minister of Sports and Youth Salah bin Ghanem al-Ali, HE the Deputy Speaker of the Shura Council Dr Hamda bint Hassan al-Sulaiti, and a number of Council members.

The event was aimed at introducing young people to the important role of the Shura Council and the importance of positive participation in the selection of its members, train the youth to practice the Council’s legislation and oversight tasks and competencies, and get acquainted with the procedural aspects related to the election of the Council’s speaker and deputies and the formation of committees.

The event is part of the activities that the Ministry of Sports and Youth is implementing to embody the Qatar National Vision 2030, and in line with the ministry’s strategy and vision that

seeks to achieve active and responsible youth with a sense of patriotism and a community practising sports.

The simulation event was also aimed at preparing a new generation of leaders who are aware of what awaits them in the future, through full and effective participation in line with Qatar National Youth Policy.

The “Simulation of the Shura Council Sessions” witnessed the holding of two sessions.

The first session witnessed the election of the Speaker, deputy Speaker, committee chairpersons, and their deputies, and the oath was taken.

In the second session, the youth discussed a topic closely related to their concerns and aspirations, centred around the “full and effective participation of youth”, highlighting the importance of volunteer work and its value, in addition to the importance of civil and political participation.

The Youth Affairs Department of the



Snapshots from the simulated Shura Council sessions.

Ministry of Sports and Youth opened the door for registration for young people to participate in this event.

A total of 117 male and females applied, 45 of whom met the conditions and were selected.

Training workshops were organised for these young people over two weeks.

The participants received training within three axes: the internal law of the Qatari Shura Council, speechwriting and public speaking, and workshops on persuasion and debate skills.

– QNA



Snapshots from the ceremony at the Katara Drama Theatre.

PICTURES: Noushad Thekkayil



Minister honours pioneers of theatrical movement in Qatar



By Tawfik Lamari
Staff Reporter

HE the Minister of Culture Sheikh Abdulrahman bin Hamad al-Thani honoured the luminaries of Qatari theatre during the 35th Doha Theatre Festival on Sunday evening at the Katara Drama Theatre.

The audience and theatre lovers were treated to a memorable night that had a distinct musical and theatrical character, during which the Theatre Affairs Centre presented a show titled *Fifty Years of Theatre*.

It was composed by Talal al-Siddiqi and directed by Nasser Abdelridha, featuring singers Rehab Malouk and Mishal al-Dosari, as well as music arrangement and

execution by Nader Abdel-Salam.

The recording was done at Al Matar Studio, the graphics by Abdelkarim Abu Tayem, the lighting by Omar Atrous and the sound design by Aziz.

The ceremony began with the screening of a documentary film chronicling the history of the theatrical movement and its beginnings in the seventies.

A set of photographs and videos were displayed, showcasing the creativity of the first artists.

Then, a group of Qatari theatre icons presented a special show, in which they reviewed their journey in words, which was accompanied by short artistic scenes with the help of a number of artists.

The ceremony witnessed the honouring of a group of pioneers of the theatrical movement in Qatar, as well as some ar-

tists from the civil groups participating in the festival.

Those honoured included Mohamed Abu Jasoum, Ghazi Hussein and Hamad Abdelridha from the Qatar Theatre Group, Dr Hassan Rashid, Saad Bakhit, Rashid al-Shaib and Ali al-Khalaf from the Doha Theatre Group, and Youssef Sultan and Saadi al-Shammari from Al Watan Theatre Group.

A number of Gulf and Arab theatre stars, who were guests at the festival, were also honoured: Khalil al-Rumaithi, Hassan Rajab, Sulaf Jalil, Mohamed al-Hamli, Ibrahim al-Zadjali, Khaled al-Muzaffar, Abdulaziz Safar and Youssef al-Jarrah.

A concert by Khaled Abdul Karim al-Hammadi highlighted the wonderful artistic balance through the theatrical works in which he participated.

Qatar’s Gaza Reconstruction Committee chief meets UN officials

Chairman of Qatar’s Gaza Reconstruction Committee Mohamed al-Emadi held a meeting with the UN Special Co-ordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, Tor Wennesland, at the committee headquarters in Gaza.

Al-Emadi and Wennesland discussed the developments in the humanitarian and field conditions in the Palestinian territories, stressing the continuation of Qatar’s efforts to calm the situation and stand by the Palestinian people.

The two parties also discussed co-operation to prevent the deterioration of the situation on the ground, ways to maintain calm in the region, and mechanisms for an immediate halt to any provocative measures that might further drag the region towards escalation.

On Sunday al-Emadi met the director of UNRWA Affairs in the Gaza Strip, Thomas White, at the committee headquarters in Gaza.

They discussed the developments in the



Al-Emadi with Wennesland.

field and humanitarian situation in the Palestinian territories, and reviewed Qatar’s efforts to achieve calm in the region.

Al-Emadi explained the practical steps that Qatar is taking to control the situation in the West Bank, Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip, and the contacts that Qatar is making with all parties to move the outstanding issues and provide the necessary support to

the Palestinians, especially in Gaza Strip.

He thanked White for the efforts made by the UNRWA to provide the necessary support to the residents of the Gaza Strip.

The UN official voiced appreciation for Qatar’s efforts and its continuous support for the UNRWA, especially in light of the financial crisis that the agency is experiencing during the current period. – QNA

QRCS reopens representative office in Niger

Under a licence from the Regulatory Authority for Charitable Activities (RACA), the Qatar Red Crescent Society (QRCS) reopened its representation office in Niger yesterday.

The official QRCS delegation visiting Niamey comprises acting secretary-general Faisal Mohamed al-Emadi, Relief and International Development Division director Dr Mohamed Salah Ibrahim, monitoring and assessment expert Rushdi Abdel-Khalik Bamasood, events co-ordinator Nasser Mohamed Balooshi, and Rachid al-Krouty, head of mission in Niger.

The opening ceremony was attended by Niger Minister of Water and Sanitation Adamou Mahaman, Minister of Humanitarian Action and Disaster Man-



agement Laouan Magagi, Minister of National Education Prof Ibrahim Natatou, Minister of Health Dr Illiassou Idi Mainasara, Niamey Governor Oudou Ambouka, Noor Foundation executive director Harou Oumarou, and RACA representative Talal Mayouf al-Makhlef.

The QRCS has 13 foreign rep-

resentation missions and offices that work with sister national societies and international humanitarian organisations.

The new office in Niger plans to launch 15 humanitarian projects this year, covering the shelter, water and sanitation, healthcare, livelihood, and food security sectors.

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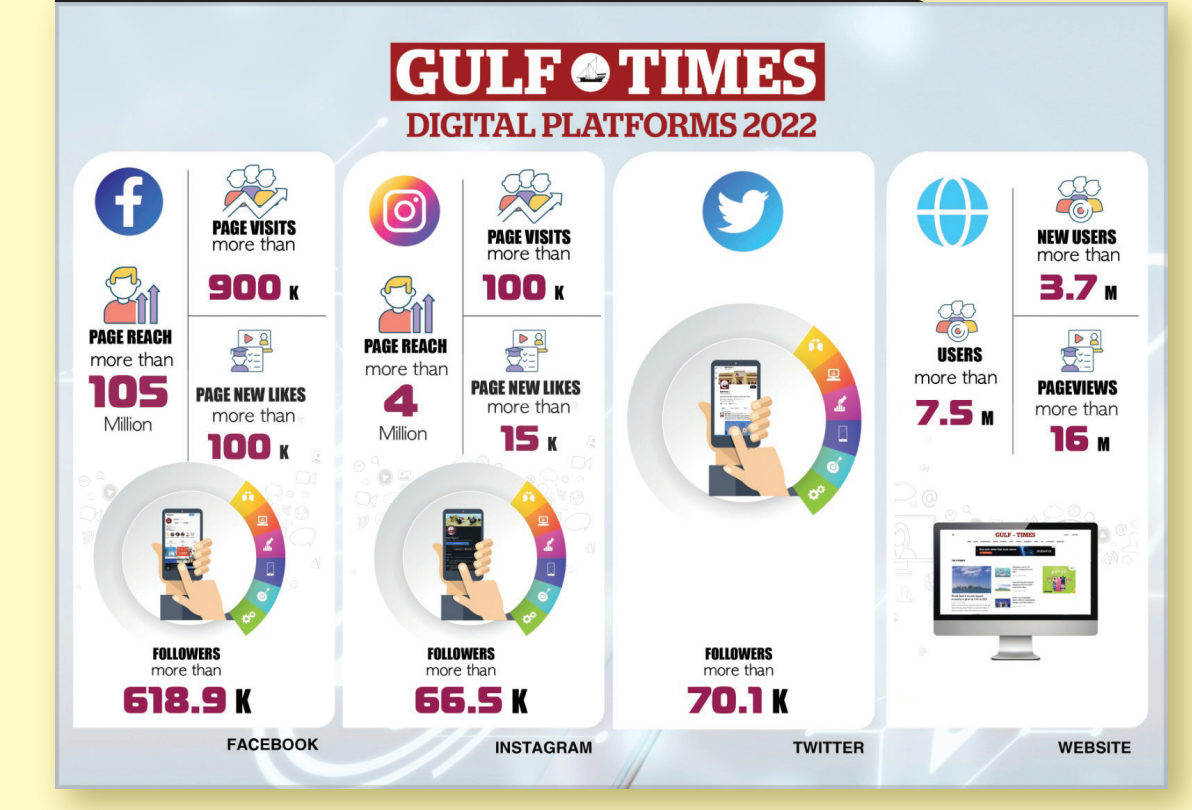




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The Ned Doha: An exclusive blend of luxury and community

By Peter Alagos
Business Reporter

The Ned Doha has redefined the country's hospitality scene not only with the preservation of brutalist architecture from Qatar's rich, historic past but by becoming a symbol of opulence and sophistication.

Gulf Times had the opportunity to sit down with key players from the hotel: General Manager Niels Kristensen, Head of Membership Gabriela Manrique, and Executive Chef Mussa Fatti.

In this interview, Kristensen provided valuable insights about The Ned brand and its history, while Manrique shared the unique features of the Membership Club. Fatti, on the other hand, presented the exceptional culinary offerings available in the hotel's different restaurants.

Gulf Times: Can you tell us more about The Ned brand and how it was founded?

Kristensen: Soho House founder Nick Jones was asked whether he would be interested in recreating the old Midland Bank in London into a Soho House, which is a typical membership club with members mostly from the creative industry.

So, Nick liked the building a lot. It was a unique 240,000sq ft building, which he described as his "blockbuster movie."

He then created a new brand within Soho House; it was called "The Ned" as the building's architect was Sir Edwin "Ned" Lutyens.

Can you talk more about The Ned Doha and how its presence in Qatar is so unique?

The branding and the colour of The Ned came from the verdict marble that was on the 92 pillars inside the old London building. So, that's why you'll



General Manager Niels Kristensen.



Head of Membership Gabriela Manrique.

see a lot of green around this building, as well.

Tell us more about the location of The Ned Doha? How has the former Ministry of Interior building's architecture influenced the design of the hotel?

In terms of expansion, the company wanted to ensure that all The Ned buildings have the same DNA.

The Ned Doha's building used to be the former Ministry of Interior, with Qatar Museums Chairperson HE Sheikha Al Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani keen to repurpose the building; it fitted the pillars that you would normally have in a Ned, and this is how The Ned



The Ned Doha provides "a personalised experience for all its guests and members."



Executive Chef Mussa Fatti.

Doha came about. You will find a lot of similarities between this building and the one in London.

What can members expect from The Ned Doha's membership club?

Manrique: Ned's Club is a membership club that offers a wonderful community, which is a key component of The Ned properties. The club is a com-

munity where members can network, both professionally and socially, as well as relax and enjoy the space as their home-away-from-home.

Our members include entrepreneurs, creative people, and like-minded professionals that you would love to meet, work, and develop valuable relationships with.

How does The Ned Club differentiate itself from other private members' clubs in the country?

I think the big difference is that aside from getting access to a community, we put in a lot of effort in giving our members access to a vibrant events calendar, which is well-curated and exclusively tailor-made for our members. Members can participate in our masterclasses, Ned-Talks, as well as fitness classes and offsite events. This allows our members to meet like-minded individuals on various occasions and in different set-

tings, all catered to their interests and needs.

What are the benefits of being a member of The Ned Club in Doha and abroad?

Being part of this community also gives you access to the Global Ned community, which means you can access the exclusive members facilities at The Ned in London and The Ned Nomad in New York, such as the lounge, pool, spa, and gym, among others.

Can you give an overview of the benefits that members receive?

We are continually adding perks and benefits to our members and recently included complimentary spa treatments, personal training sessions and dedicated parking for our members at The Ned Doha.

In all The Ned hotels globally, members get a 20% discount on the best available rooms, as well as a 20% discount on public restaurants and special rates



for special events, including brunch. What is most important is the events calendar, which has a variety of events – from food and beverage to music, fashion, fitness classes, and offsite entertainment.

We also have a global mobile where members can book rooms, spa treatments, and members' events. The app also has a tool that allows companies to offer a 20% discount on their services. In Doha, we are working on creating partnerships with local businesses.

Can you give an overview of the monthly events and activities that members can participate in at The Ned Club?

Overall, we have more than 70 events this month at Ned's Club, including fitness classes, around four to five classes per week, and for those looking to unleash their inner artist, painting and mirror painting workshops are available to explore. We are also planning to host a cigar station, as well as to organise many different panel discussions on various topics, such as the economy or cybersecurity, among others, which our members can enjoy the most.

How does The Ned Doha ensure that members receive personalised attention and service?

We ensure that members get the best attention and personalised service from The Ned. To ensure that our services are tailored to our members' individual needs, we request that they provide us with various details about themselves, their profession, and their hobbies.

We make sure that all members feel welcome and that they are part of a community. When new member joins the Membership Club, they will be given a tour of the hotel and its facilities. Additionally, they will receive a welcome box, which includes a platinum membership card, Ned Notes, which outlines the rules and regulations of the club, and a special gift from The Ned.

Tell us more about the culinary offerings at The Ned Doha. What makes The Ned Doha restaurants special?

Fatti: Some of the restaurants in The Ned Doha are similar to what we have in London, so the concepts moved from London to Qatar. The Ned Doha offers an inviting atmosphere with customised furniture, decor, and layout that create a comfortable and personalised experience. The diverse range of restaurants provides a variety of cuisines from Italian to Japanese, American, European and Levantine.

What makes us special is the culinary diversity, the people, the quality of ingredients, and our attention to detail. We provide a personalised experience for all our guests and members, going above and beyond to ensure that no request is ever denied and that anything is possible. This commitment to personalisation is what sets us apart.

At Ned's Club, you can start your day with breakfast, enjoy afternoon tea, or have dinner in our restaurant, or private dining room. We also offer a great space for members to socialise after work.

Qatar in joint call with Arab health ministers' panel for end to inhumane practices in Palestine

The Council of Arab Ministers for Health has called on the World Health Organisation (WHO) to intervene immediately to stop the inhumane practices contrary to international conventions committed by the occupation against medical personnel and ambulances in the occupied Palestinian territories, which prevent health teams from carrying out their duties, in addition to impeding the supply of fuel and electricity to hospitals and health centres in Palestine.

This came during the meeting of the 59th regular session of the Council of Arab Ministers for Health, which was held on Sunday in Geneva, chaired by Algeria, with the participation of the delegation of Qatar headed by HE the Minister of Public Health Dr Hanan Mohamed al-Kuwari. The meeting dealt with several issues, particularly the health conditions in the occupied Palestinian territories, including East Jerusalem and the occupied Syrian Golan. It also discussed the strategy for improving the health of mothers, children, and adolescent girls in the Arab region. In a statement, the General Secretariat of the Arab League said that the Council of Arab Ministers for Health approved, during the meeting, the activation of the pink portfolio initiative for the health of Arab women, and also approved the new formation of its executive office, in addition to adopting the unified speech of the Council before the 76th WHO World Health Assembly. The 59th session of the Council of Arab Ministers for Health witnessed the launch of the Arab strategy for a health-friendly budget in the presence of Arab health ministers, the UN Population Fund for Arab States, and the WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean. During the meeting, the Assistant Secretary-General and Head of the Social Affairs Sector of the Arab League, ambassador Haifa Abu Ghazaleh, explained that this strategy is a reference for Arab countries to develop health budgets that are more responsive to the needs of their population. (QNA)

HMC signs pact with QCS for its innovative projects

Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC) and Qatar Cancer Society (QCS) recently signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to provide funding support for cancer control projects, including, but not limited to, patient experience, improving facilities for cancer patients, improving cancer care, and employee participation in the field of cancer control.

The agreement was signed by Hamad Nasser Abdulla al-Khalifa, chief of Health Facilities Development and acting chief of Business Services, and Sheikh Dr Khalid bin Jabor al-Thani, chairman of QCS, in the presence of several HMC executive leaders and a delegation from QCS.

HMC's liaison officer who will facilitate this working relationship with QCS, Nasser al-Naimi, deputy chief of Quality for Centre for Patient Experience and Staff Engage-



Officials of HMC and QCS at the signing ceremony.

ment, director for Hamad Healthcare Quality Institute, and chairperson of 16000 Health Sector Services, said: "This partnership between HMC and QCS will further strengthen our efforts to deliver our services with a person-centred approach to care, which results to enhancing

our patients' overall experience in HMC."

Sheikh Dr Khalid added: "We support the principles and values of HMC, and QCS aims to bring these into fruition. We look forward to implementing activities that serve the mutual goals of both QCS and HMC."

PHCC celebrates anniversary of Partners and Family Advisory Group

The Primary Health Care Corporation (PHCC) held the fourth Partners and Family Advisory Group (PFAG) to celebrate three years of the first Advisory Group's contributions in the strategic cycle 2019-2023, as well as welcoming the second group for the upcoming strategy 2024-2026.

The meeting was chaired by Dr Maryam Abdul Malik, PHCC medical director, and attended by PFAG partners alongside PHCC executive directors.

In her opening speech, Dr Mariam Abdul-Malik said: "Our partnership with patients and their families is vital to the success of our healthcare services."

The meeting also high-



lighted PHCC achievements and enhancements during the first cycle. Dr Amal al-Ali, executive director of Quality and Patient Safety, presented the improvement and changes that have been made based

on PFAG inputs. It included many expansionary projects in PHCC services across the country, the introduction of new technology-based services, and the establishment of new healthcare centres.

Man arrested, over QR71,000 stolen from bank customer recovered

The Ministry of Interior (MoI) yesterday said the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) recovered QR 71,628 that was stolen from a customer inside a bank.

The accused has been caught and referred to the Public Prosecution.

The MoI, through a video on its Twitter account, said the accused stole a plastic bag filled with money while the complainant was away from his personal belongings and not paying attention.

The authorities concerned were able to spot and identify the suspect after checking the surveillance camera footage. The MoI said the accused's movements were tracked and moni-



The arrested person is seen with the recovered money.

tored, by checking earlier footage, from the time he left home until he committed the crime.

On being confronted, the suspect confessed to the accusation against him, and was referred

to the Public Prosecution along with the seized items. The MoI has urged the public to protect their personal belongings and not neglect them, whether in public or private places.

Hashish seized from fruit shipment

The Maritime Customs Department, represented by the Al Ruwais Port Customs, thwarted the smuggling of the banned narcotic substance, hashish, after a shipment con-

taining fruits raised the suspicion of Customs officials.

The total weight of the seized materials amounted to 62.7kg, the General Authority of Customs tweeted.



Individual arrested for firing weapon at house party

The Ministry of Interior (MoI) yesterday announced the arrest of a person who had fired a firearm during a house party. "With reference to what was circulated on social media that a person fired a firearm during a house party, the person concerned was arrested and the

weapon used was seized," the MoI tweeted. The ministry added that necessary legal measures were being taken against him. The ministry affirmed its keenness to take all necessary measures to ensure the security and safety of society.

Ministry recalls Jeep model

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI), in co-operation with United Cars Almana, has announced the recall of Jeep Cherokee, 2016 model.

The recall has been done, due to a defect in the software of the Drive Train Control Module (DTCM) and the Electric Park Brake (EPB), which

may lead to the loss of driving force while the vehicle is running or the loss of the stopping position (P) while parking the vehicle.

The MoCI has urged all customers to report any violations to its Consumer Protection and Anti-Commercial Fraud Department, which processes complaints,

inquiries and suggestions through the following channels: Call centre: 16001, e-mail: info@moci.gov.qa, Twitter @MOCIQATAR, Instagram MOCIQATAR. MoCI's mobile application is available on iPhone and Android devices - MOCI_QATAR

EAA Foundation urges access to education for Sudan children

The Education Above All (EAA) Foundation has expressed its concern over the ongoing conflict in Sudan and its detrimental impact on access to education for thousands of children. EAA called on the international community to unite in their efforts to safeguard educational institutions, students, and teachers during these challenging times, ensuring the fundamental human right to a safe and quality education is upheld. In a statement, EAA said the escalating conflict in Sudan has disrupted the education of countless children, putting their futures at risk. It is crucial for all parties involved to prioritise the safety and well-being of children, as well as respect the sanctity of educational spaces, EAA stressed. Maleiha Malik, Executive Director of Protect Education in Insecurity and Conflict (PEIC) at EAA, commented: "The current situation in Sudan highlights the importance of working together to protect education during conditions of conflict and ensure that children have the opportunity to learn and grow in a safe environment. Education

is the foundation of prosperous, peaceful, and just societies, and we must strive to preserve it during times of crisis." Dr Mary Joy Pigozzi, Executive Director of EAA's EAC Programme said: "Not only does every child have the right to a quality education, it is in everyone's interest to ensure that each and every child and young people can safely access and remain in school. It is vital that education be disruption free in order to ensure the well-being and empower the potential of our children and societies. We must stop making children pay the price of the Sudanese conflict." The Education Above All has urged all parties involved in the conflict to respect the rights of students, teachers, and educational institutions, and to prioritise the needs of children during these challenging times. EAA's #UniteToProtect campaign aims to raise global awareness of the importance of education and "the need to protect the future of our next generations by guaranteeing the right to safe, quality education for every child." (QNA)



QU launches taxation minor

Qatar University's (QU) College of Business and Economics has launched a minor in taxation, in co-operation with the General Tax Authority (GTA) and Qatar Financial Centre (QFC). At the launch event yesterday, QU president Dr Hassan al-Derham said the launch reflects the university's keenness to respond quickly to the changes in the labour market and its ability to provide new programmes that meet the needs of the state and the business community. "The development of this programme came in response to the tax policies and legislation in the countries of the region that have been approved in recent years, to achieve further comprehensive economic diversification, which includes diversifying government revenue sources and reducing dependence on oil and gas as a main source of government revenue. "This calls for reconsidering and developing other educational programmes in line with the new financial and economic policies in the Gulf countries. We expect that graduates of this programme will have a major role in making and for-



Dignitaries at the launch event yesterday.

mulating economic and tax policies that reflect the direction of the countries of this region towards tax reform." Ahmed bin Issa al-Mohannadi, president of the General Tax Authority (GTA) said in his speech: "We have been keen to co-operate with Qatar University to introduce the new minor, which will prepare the national academic competencies, enhance efforts to localise jobs, and support the country's capabilities of qualified cadres in the tax sector, in line with the Qatar National Vision 2030. "We expect this new minor to build the next generation of business leaders and entrepreneurs who have the

ability and awareness about the importance of tax administration, the necessity of tax compliance, and its effects on business." Hamed al-Saadi, chief financial and tax officer at the QFC, said: "The QFC has always sought to strengthen partnerships with many universities and scientific research institutions, and to support programmes and initiatives aimed at creating qualified national cadres to meet the requirements and challenges of the labour market, believing in the importance of advancing the education and scientific research sectors in achieving economic development goals.

"This programme is the first of its kind in the region, which will contribute to enhancing the business environment and diversifying the national economy." Prof Rana Sobh, dean of the College of Business and Economics, noted that the establishment of the minor could not have been implemented without the support of the efforts of the GTA and the QFC. Prof Rick Kreyer, a leading taxation law and policy expert and a Professor at the University of Western Australia, was the keynote speaker at the launch. He discussed the importance of offering the new programme to college students.

HBKU and DI organise panel discussion to boost academic co-operation

QNA
Doha

The School of Economics, Administration and Public Policy at the Doha Institute for Graduate Studies (DI) and the College of Public Policy at the Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU) organised a panel discussion to discuss the reality in the Middle East and North Africa in the topics of policy-making, governance, regulating political economy and economy of society with emphasis on Qatar as a case study. Attended by several researchers and academics who are interested in the areas of economy, administration and public policy, with the participation of teachers and students of the relevant post-graduate programmes, the panel discussion was intended to share expertise, ideas and boost the academic co-operation between the two entities. The panel discussion also addressed a wide range of topics



related to the theoretical framework for general management and risk management, as well as reconsidering investment theories and its applications on cases in the Arab world. The event discussed the latest research and studies in the area of climate change and environmental corporate governance with a focus on ways to support decision-making process for the institutions concerned with

managing climate change and environment risks in addition to highlighting the role undertaken by Qatar in conserving the environment despite the environmental deterioration at the global level. In addition, the speakers discussed the general investment policies in the case of the democratic transition in the Middle East and North Africa by focusing on Tunisia as a case study.

Al Jazeera Media Institute, Malaysia university sign pact

Al Jazeera Media Institute and the International Islamic University Malaysia recently signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) in the field of media at Al Jazeera Media Network's headquarters. The signing ceremony was attended by Dr Mostefa Souag, acting director-general of the network, and Mohamed Khalid Nuruddin, Malaysian minister of higher education. Iman al-Ameri, director of Al Jazeera Media Institute, expressed happiness at signing the memorandum with a leading educational institution such as the International Islamic University Malaysia, noting that the MoU comes within the framework of strengthening the institute's partnerships at the international level. Fakhri bin Abdul Razzaq, dean of the International Is-



Officials at the MoU-signing ceremony.

lamic University Malaysia, praised the agreement, considering it an opportunity for his university students to benefit from the expertise of Al Jazeera Media Network in the field of media, which he said has a great

reputation in his country. The dean also praised the leading role and experience in the fields of training and development of Al Jazeera Media Institute in the region and the world. The three-year memoran-

dum sets out a framework for co-operation in common areas such as media training, research, a series of journalism-related workshops, and the organisation of bilateral audiences and conferences.

West Energy Centre provides sustainable cooling services to HMC facilities

A team from the Qatar General Electricity & Water Corporation (Kahramaa) visited the West Energy Centre that serves Hamad General Hospital, Surgical Speciality Center and the new Trauma and Emergency building along with the administrative buildings and service facilities of the Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC). The West Energy Centre provides the above-mentioned HMC facilities with a current cooling capacity of 12,500 tonnes and a future capacity of 20,000 tonnes.

Headed by Jamal Yousef al-Derbasti, director of the District Cooling Services Department, the team included a number of Kahramaa engineers. According to a Kahramaa press statement, the visit was meant to see the extent of the commitment of the operating system at the centre to implement the instructions of the district cooling code and key performance indicators, and monitor its achievement of cooling specifications and standards approved by the administration during design and construction phases. Kahramaa said HMC has adopted the district cooling system, with a high level of reliability.

HMC has replaced traditional cooling devices with a more sustainable and efficient cooling system characterised by a high level of reliability and long life span. The new system combines cost savings and effectiveness. The West Energy Centre, designed and constructed according to the latest technologies available in the field of district cooling, began operating in 2022 to distribute chilled water to the HMC buildings. In addition to the district



Glimpses from the visit.



cooling plant, the West Energy Centre includes two electrical stations, three floors of car parking and the blood donation centre of HMC. Kahramaa encourages the development and use of the cooling system for areas on a large scale throughout the country, especially in new development and urban projects. It reduces the cost of energy and infra-

structure while enhancing consumption efficiency and the water security of Qatar through the use of water sources by using treated wastewater and seawater, as well as reducing carbon dioxide emissions by reducing consumption rates of natural gas needed to produce electricity while helping to preserve the environment and reduce noise pollution.

CCQ's female students team wins gold in Universities Padel Tournament



The Community College of Qatar (CCQ) female students' team won the first place in the 1st edition of Universities Padel Tournament. Held at the University of Doha for Science and Technology, the two-day event saw the participation of six teams. The Padel Tournament for universities has been adopted by the Qatar Collegiate Sports Federation, along with the Qatar Tennis Federation.

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Bridging the AI regulation gap

On March 22, the Future of Life Institute published an open letter calling for a six-month moratorium on the development of generative artificial intelligence (AI) systems, citing the potential dangers to humanity. Since the publication of that letter, numerous high-profile figures have voiced similar concerns, including AI pioneer Geoffrey Hinton, who recently resigned from Google to raise the alarm about the “existential threat” posed by the technology he played so pivotal a role in developing.

The seriousness of these warnings should not be underestimated. Demands for government intervention rarely originate from tech companies, which in recent years have fiercely resisted efforts by American and European policymakers to regulate the industry. But given the economic and strategic promise of generative AI, development cannot be expected to pause or slow down on its own.

Meanwhile, members of the European Parliament have voted in favour of a more stringent version of the AI Act, the landmark regulatory framework designed to address the challenges posed by “traditional” AI systems, trying to adapt it to tackle the so-called “foundation models” and advanced generative AI systems such as OpenAI’s GPT-4. As one of the main negotiators of the European Union’s groundbreaking Digital Markets Act (DMA) and Digital Services Act (DSA), we recognise the importance of creating a human-centred digital world and mitigating the potential negative impact of new technologies. But the speed at which the EU is developing restrictive measures raises several concerns.

First, large language models (LLMs) like GPT-4 could significantly increase the productivity of white-collar workers. At a time when developed countries are desperately seeking ways to boost productivity, Europe cannot afford to miss out yet again on a technological breakthrough that could enhance its competitiveness. But the version of the AI Act as issued by the European Parliament acts as a de facto ban on LLM development on the continent.

Second, the EU’s rapid response could result in yet another missed opportunity for the United States and Europe to agree on a common framework for regulating the tech industry. So far, transatlantic regulatory discussions have been plagued by misunderstandings, and both sides have pursued their own initiatives without proper co-ordination.

In recent years, the EU has enacted several far-reaching bills to regulate the tech sector, such as the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), the Data Governance Act, the DSA, and the DMA. But while Europe has embraced stricter digital regulation, sometimes at the cost of its own competitiveness, the US has been slow to adopt new rules, owing to partisan divisions and concerns about potential infringements on freedom of speech. Unfortunately, although a common framework is necessary to ensure fair competition among businesses, there is little indication that the US and European approaches to overseeing the industry will converge anytime soon.


To be sure, both sides are expected to seek regulatory frameworks that align with their own needs and priorities. But our inability to find common ground on digital regulation has resulted in short-term inefficiencies and could lead to long-term decoupling, because a shared digital space becomes increasingly difficult to maintain when rules and regulations diverge significantly. This also has political implications: when democracies cannot unite around shared values and goals, illiberal forces and regimes thrive.



The transformative power of LLMs, particularly their potential to cause widespread socioeconomic disruption by displacing millions of workers, raises the stakes for European and American policymakers to establish a shared regulatory framework. This would require concessions from both sides. The EU, for its part, would need to pause its own AI-related legislation. The US, which has struggled to contain the collateral damage of new technologies despite leading the world in innovation, would have to find a way to achieve a bipartisan consensus in Congress.



While regulatory harmonisation would not be easy, it remains the most viable long-term solution. Europe must take advantage of the opportunity to gain a competitive edge, and the US must intervene to halt the race to the bottom that is currently playing out in the AI domain.


Much like the banking sector before it, the digital sector has become integral to the functioning of our economies and societies. But while the finance industry operates under common rules aimed at ensuring stability and fairness, such as anti-fraud protocols, anti-corruption frameworks, and prudential regulations, the regulation of the tech industry is fragmented and therefore ineffective.

The current critical moment could offer a unique opportunity to change that. If we seize it, we could ensure that the US and Europe benefit from generative AI’s immense potential, and that the technology develops within an ethical and responsible framework. — Project Syndicate

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Pakistan on edge as army seeks to neutralise Khan

By Gibran Naiyyar Peshimam
Islamabad

Pakistan’s military has struck back after an unprecedented challenge to its hegemony by popular former prime minister Imran Khan and his followers, but the nuclear-armed nation remains caught between its most powerful institution and the man who was once a firm ally.

Khan’s arrest on corruption charges earlier this month, which he says was at the behest of the generals, led to violent nationwide protests, attacks on military buildings and on the homes of senior officers, allegedly by the former prime minister’s supporters.

There has never been that kind of challenge to Pakistan’s military, which has held sway over the country since independence in 1947 with a mixture of fear and respect. It has been in power for three of those decades and has wielded extraordinary influence even with a civilian government in office.

“I’ve seen the fall of Dhaka and of course there was a lot of opposition later, but never of this severity,” said Naeem Khalid Lodhi, a general who was part of the army’s top decision making process as a corps commander, and later held key government posts.

Populist civilian leader Zulfikar Ali Bhutto took charge after that debacle, holding sway over the army for five years. The generals, however, staged a military coup in 1977, and stayed in power for 11 years. Military ruler General Zia-ul-Haq ordered Bhutto hanged.

Khan was released by court order two days after his arrest, but his Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party now faces the ire of the military.

Thousands of supporters have been arrested, including Khan’s top aides. The government has said those accused of being involved in attacks on its installations will be tried by military courts — a platform typically reserved for enemies of the state.

With Pakistan also grappling with a devastating economic crisis, a showdown between the military and its most popular political leader could push the nation of 220mn to the brink of chaos.

“(The military) is trying to assert raw power by invoking the draconian Army Act against civil society and thereby risks destroying Pakistan’s fragile constitutional system,” said Shuja Nawaz, a distinguished fellow at the Atlantic Council’s South Asia Center and author of *The Battle for Pakistan*.

A spokesperson for the military did not respond to several requests for comment.

Khan’s gambit

While civilian governments have historically been unable to stand up to the military’s might in a country where no elected prime minister has completed a full term, Khan is unlikely to be a pushover.

The larger-than-life 70-year-old is an Oxford graduate, was part of London’s smart set in the late 1970s and later led cricket-mad Pakistan to victory in the 1992 World Cup. Famed for his aggressive, never-say-die attitude when he played the game, he seems to have brought that approach into politics.

After years in the wilderness, rival political parties said the military supported his ascent to become prime minister in 2018 while Khan himself blamed the same generals for his ouster last year. The military denies any role in his taking office or his ouster.

Since then Khan has shown an uncanny ability to mobilise crowds and some analysts say he has the support of many in the rank-and-file of the military.

“Khan has weaponised the resentment his followers feel about his removal into a frontal assault on army leaders,” said Aqil Shah, an academic and author of the book *The Army and Democracy in Pakistan*.

His popularity remains high — well ahead of his opponents, according to local polls — in the run-up to national elections which are due by November this year.

However, Khan is vulnerable on many fronts. If he is found guilty in any of the numerous cases



While civilian governments have historically been unable to stand up to the military’s might in a country where no elected prime minister has completed a full term, Imran Khan is unlikely to be a pushover

against him, ranging from corruption to inciting terror, it would in all probability disqualify him from participating in the polls.

The army’s vast intelligence apparatus will also turn the screws on PTI’s leadership, many of whom have already jumped ship because of pressure and fear of retribution, Khan says.

The way forward

Analysts say talks are necessary between Khan, the army and the civilian government of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to defuse the situation — but there have been no indications of any negotiated settlement.

Khan has dismissed the Sharif government as inconsequential.

Information Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb told Reuters that Khan’s supporters attacked “sensitive military installations” and that the law would take its course.

Zulfiqar Bukhari, one of Khan’s few close aides yet to

be arrested, says the PTI has reached out for talks with the military, but had got no response.

“Unfortunately, no-one wants to listen,” he said.

Some analysts believe Khan will have to placate the generals in some way for him to survive.

Others said the gloves were off and the military would not back down.

“Ultimate power in Pakistan flows through the barrel of the gun,” said Shah, the academic. “The military is unlikely to give Khan the off-ramp any time soon.”

Husain Haqqani, Pakistan’s former ambassador to the United States and currently a scholar at the Hudson Institute in Washington, said the military has lost standing significantly and it will not accept being attacked and taunted.

“The military’s power comes from its ability to deploy force, not popularity — Pakistan’s generals like being liked but they like being in control even more,” he said. — Reuters

MoPH adds HPV vaccine to approved list

The Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) has introduced the human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine among the list of approved vaccines in Qatar, as an optional vaccine.

The introduction of the HPV vaccine comes within the framework of the Ministry of Public Health's strategy to protect community members from cervical cancer.

Dr Hamad E al-Rumaihi, director of Health Protection & Communicable Diseases Division - MoPH, said: "The introduction of the HPV vaccine in the list of approved vaccines comes as part of the Ministry of Public Health continuous effort to prevent and reduce the burden of communicable/vaccine preventable diseases in Qatar. In line with this, MoPH continuously updates its recommendations and introduces new vaccines."

Dr al-Rumaihi added that the World Health Organisation (WHO), Food and Drug Administration and the European Medicines Agency have recommended the use of the HPV vaccine, as it is used in 125 countries over the world in their national immunisation programmes, noting that the new vaccine has the potential to prevent the HPV-related cancers and other conditions.

■ Vaccine will be provided free of charge at all PHCC centres and CDC



Dr Hamad E al-Rumaihi



Dr Soha S Albayat



Dr Afaf al-Ansary



Dr Mona al-Maslmany



Dr Samya al-Abdulla

Center (CDC), Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC), highlighted.

Dr Samya al-Abdulla, executive director of operations, PHCC, noted: "Considering the disastrous psychological, social, and economic burden of cancer and the quality of life of both individuals and families, it is a priority to make all possible efforts to prevent it, whenever possible. Fortunately, there is a safe and effective vaccine to prevent HPV-related cancers. We

have added HPV vaccination to our routine preventive services in primary healthcare centres. We encourage all target populations - or their parents - to ensure that they receive the HPV vaccine and thus protect themselves, and their children."

"The HPV vaccine in Qatar can protect against nine types of HPV which account for around 95% of cervical cancer causes and around 90% of warts. Thus, using HPV vaccine helps protect girls and boys against several

types of cancer and warts caused by this virus. The primary target of HPV vaccine are girls and boys aged 11-26 years. For the age group 11-14 years, the vaccine will be given in a two doses series and for teens and young adults, 15-26 years, it will be given as three doses," explained Dr Soha S Albayat, head of Vaccination Section, MoPH.

"People in high-risk groups up to 45 years old may also benefit from the vaccine. However, the HPV vaccine works best

when received at younger ages. The vaccine will be provided free of charge at all PHCC centres and the CDC."

She added that a training workshop will be organised on May 20 to introduce to health sector cadres to the vaccine, and explain how to maximise its benefits in preventing HPV infection, as well as all the details related to obtaining the vaccine for the target groups.

Dr Afaf al-Ansary, senior consultant - Women's Hospital -

HMC, said: "HPV is a group of viruses, and the high-risk types are associated with the development of many cancers, including cervical cancer, cancers of the head, neck and

oropharynx, as well as with warts and respiratory papillomatosis. High-risk HPV types are highly associated mainly with cervical cancers. Many people will get HPV infection through their life, which in most cases resolve spontaneously. However, some of the infections with the high-risk types may persist over time, leading to cancers. HPV cannot be treated, but with the HPV vaccine it could be prevented."

The HPV vaccine has been used in many countries of the world for several years and its safety and effectiveness are monitored by several global organisations, including the US Center for Disease Control and Prevention, WHO and the

European Medicines Agency. Evidence has shown that the vaccine is safe and effective. Parents can also speak to doctors to discuss the need to vaccinate their children with HPV vaccine.

Qatar participates as 32nd Abu Dhabi International Book Fair kicks off

The Ministry of Culture and several Qatari publishers are participating in the 32nd annual Abu Dhabi International Book Fair, taking place from May 22-28 at the Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Center.

The Qatari publishers participating in the event include Dar Al Watad for Publishing and Distribution, Hamad Bin Khalifa University Press and Qatar University Press.

Hosting the Republic of Türkiye as the guest of honour, this edition celebrates the concept of sustainability as a central idea with various initiatives, events and seminars aimed at highlighting global best practices to support sustainability trends in publishing industry. It also organises dialogue sessions and discussions on climate change and food security.

This edition will also focus on the achievements of 14th-century Arab philosopher, Ibn Khaldun, as a pioneer of social



sciences. Speaking with Qatar News Agency (QNA), Director of QU Press Prof Fatma al-Sowaidi said that that more than 50 QU Press' publications, including 10 new, will go on display in the event, most notably on museums, legal studies, social and human sciences, and proposals for translation.

Prof al-Sowaidi added that their participation aims to high-

light the QU Press as a leading publishing industry player at the international level, by publishing authors from around the world and participating in workshops to exchange ideas and experiences with international publishers, in a way that enhances the possibility of signing agreements and partnerships with regional and international distribution centres. (QNA)

HMC concludes 7th Qatar Colorectal and Gastroenterology Conference

Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC)'s Department of Colorectal Surgery recently hosted the 7th Qatar Colorectal and Gastroenterology Conference at HMC's Itqan Clinical Simulation and Innovation Centre and Radisson Blu Hotel, Doha. The opening session was attended by Dr Abdulla al-Ansari, HMC's chief medical officer and head of Surgery Department as well as a number of clinical leaders from HMC. The conference also featured international visiting endoscopic colorectal surgery experts, including Prof Simon Travis and Prof James Lindsay from the United Kingdom, Prof Ayman Agha from Germany, in addition to several speakers and presenters from GCC states, including Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Oman.

Dr Mohamed Abunada, senior consultant and head of HMC's Department of Colorectal

Surgery and chairman of the Conference Organising Committee, said that the conference discussed the latest developments in endoscopic colorectal surgery and provided an opportunity to hear from international colorectal surgery experts. The conference also provided an ideal platform to highlight the outcomes of research studies conducted in this field by HMC physicians, which will contribute to ensuring the delivery of high-quality healthcare services to patients. Dr Khalid al-Ejji, senior consultant and deputy head of HMC's Gastroenterology Department and conference co-chair, said that the conference discussed three main topics, namely colon cancer and the latest diagnosis and treatment methods including chemotherapy and surgery; ulcerative colitis and Crohn's Disease, which are two immunological diseases

that began to spread in the Middle East, and the latest developments in the treatment of these diseases; and pelvic floor diseases and chronic constipation related to colon diseases. Several research papers conducted by HMC physicians were presented in the conference. Dr Anil John, senior consultant, gastroenterologist, delivered a presentation on the Colorectal Screening Programme in Qatar. Dr Yahaya Bensuleiman, consultant gastroenterologist, presented on the endoscopic management of colon polyps. Dr Ahmed Ayash, associate consultant gastroenterologist at HMC, discussed the role of artificial intelligence in polyp detection. Dr Reem al-Sulaiman, consultant in genetic counselling, presented on hereditary polyposis syndromes. Dr Khaleel Sultan, senior consultant gastroenterologist, presented on colonic inertia.

AMAN participates in consultative seminar on violence against women and girls

The Protection and Social Rehabilitation Centre (AMAN), one of the centres of the Qatar Social Work Foundation, participated in the Consultative Seminar on Violence Against Women and Girls: Causes and Consequences. Chaired by the chairperson of the Union of Kuwaiti Women Associations Sheikha Fadia Saad al-Abdullah al-Sabah, the seminar was held in Kuwait in co-operation with the Geneva Institute for Human Rights (GIHR) and the UN, with the attendance of UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women and girls, Reem Alsalem. The consultative seminar was attended by representatives of non-governmental organisations working in the field of combating violence against women and girls, as well as the Resident Representative of the UN Development Programme in Kuwait, Hideko Hadzjalic, and

the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights' (OHCHR) Regional Office, in addition to the UN Population Fund. AMAN executive director Sheikh Dr Nasser bin Ahmed al-Thani participated in the consultative seminar. During the seminar, Sheikh Dr Nasser presented AMAN's experience in the field of social protection, highlighting its most important services for women such as raising awareness, offering women protection, rehabilitation and integration into society, and dedicating a hotline service (919), in addition to providing temporary shelter, and the Consult AMAN app dedicated to women. This consultative seminar coincides with Union of Kuwaiti Women Associations' celebration of Kuwaiti Women's Day, falling on May 16 annually. - QNA

Earthna launches reports highlighting pathway to achieving circular economy

Earthna Centre for a Sustainable Future (Earthna), a member of Qatar Foundation, in collaboration with policy consulting firm Global Counsel, launched the 'Circular Economy and Energy Transition in Qatar' reports during an event yesterday.

It was attended by HE Sheikh Dr Faleh bin Nasser bin Ahmed bin Ali al-Thani, Minister of Environment and Climate Change.

Bringing together new and pre-existing national and international research to explore the challenges and opportunities associated with creating a new pathway to a circular economy, key findings show it can be achieved across several sectors in the country.

The reports aims to help businesses and organisations accelerate their journey towards circularity by proposing greater collaboration, encouraging innovative sustainable technologies, and promoting behaviour change.

Focusing on three priority sectors - food and domestic waste, hospitality, and the built environment - the reports present evidence to support the transition to a circular economy - a system-level framework that promotes economic growth, enabled by efficient use of resources throughout their lifecycle.

On the importance of establishing a circular economy in Qatar, HE Sheikh Dr Faleh said:



Glimpses from the launch event.



"Qatar National Vision (QNV) 2030 sets out our country's ambition to transform the economy so that it can sustain its own development and provide a high standard of living for citizens and residents for generations

to come. One of the leading priorities of QNV is economic diversification - moving the country away from its dependence on oil and gas. However, it is imperative that we do this in a sustainable way, which protects

and enhances our environment. Striving to create a circular economy is an important step in this process."

Reflecting on the reports, and how the findings will help contribute to QNV 2030, Dr Gonzalo Castro de la Mata, Earthna's executive director, said: "We are delighted that the reports identify opportunities for Qatar to drive economic growth in a sustainable way, by supporting the journey towards a circular economy across industries in Qatar."

Benjamin Wegg-Prosser, managing director at Global Counsel, added: "Qatar's sustainable development, in both senses of the word, depends on its ability to progressively drive growth away from its carbon sectors while also striving to achieve it in a sustainable manner. The 'Circular Economy' reports make the case that there are not only economic opportunities to be gained from the transition but also advantages for the environment and future generations. Global Counsel is proud to have collaborated with Earthna on these reports to support progress on addressing climate change, preserving Qatar's ecosystems and biodiversity, and recommending policies that can act as a guide for other similar countries in the region."

For more information on Earthna or the 'Circular Economy and Energy Transition in Qatar' reports, visit Earthna.qa

Australian-Egyptian oud virtuoso performs in Qatar

The Australian embassy in Doha organised the visit of Australian-Egyptian oud player, Joseph Tawadros to Qatar from May 20-21. He performed at the Museum of Islamic Art in Doha. The concert was attended by 200 invitees, including members of the diplomatic community, prominent musicians, and music enthusiasts. In addition to the private concert, Tawadros has also conducted a workshop for students at the Qatar Music Academy including a jam session with oud players in Doha. Jonathan Muir, Australian ambassador, said: "It's an honour to have Joseph in Doha for the first time to share his exceptional talent with audiences in Qatar. His fusion of traditional Arabic music with other cultural influences speaks to Australia's rich multi-cultural tapestry".





HE the Minister of Communications and Information Technology Mohamed bin Ali al-Mannai.



HE the Minister of State and Chairman of Qatar Free Zones (QFZ) Authority Ahmad al-Sayed.



Performers dazzle the audience during the launch ceremony.



Dignitaries at the event.

New Google Cloud region opened in Doha

From Page 1

For his part, al-Sayed said: “The launch of the new Google Cloud region in Qatar marks a significant milestone in our growing partnership with Google Cloud that started in 2020 with an agreement to establish Google Cloud’s region in Doha.”

“We are proud to provide world-class cloud services from the free zones in Qatar, which is in addition to the QFZ’s pivotal role in introducing disruptive technologies and advanced digital infrastructure, creating opportunities for businesses to enhance their capabilities, foster innovation, and advance the technology sector in the state,” he added.

“This will further accelerate Qatar’s digital transformation and the realisation of Qatar National Vision 2030 that aims to build a sustainable knowledge-based economy,” al-Sayed said.

The QFZ and Google Cloud’s strategic collaboration agreement to enable in-country Google Cloud presence was announced in early 2020.

The QFZ’s continued support of

the launch of the CoE has helped the growth of the technology ecosystem in Qatar.

Qatar Airways Group Chief Executive HE Akbar al-Baker said: “Qatar Airways is excited at the opportunity offered by Google setting up its cloud region in Qatar. This gives us the ability to innovate jointly with Google and leverage their rich cloud service offerings.”

“We are particularly keen to use AI/ML-driven data insights using Google Cloud as a platform for enhancing our world-acclaimed customer service whilst also improving our operational efficiencies,” he said, referring to artificial intelligence/machine learning. “Areas like data-driven predictive maintenance will now be much easier with Google Cloud being in Qatar and our data residing here securely.”

beIN Media Group chairman Nasser Ghanem al-Khelaifi said: “We are delighted to enter this major new partnership with Google Cloud, which will help beIN embrace the latest technologies and innovations.”

“As a proud Qatari media group, we are always looking to innovate as a



Google Cloud Go-to-Market president Adaire Fox-Martin.



Google Cloud Qatar general manager Ghassan Kosta.

business and find ways to improve the experience of millions of our subscribers worldwide,” he said. “In partnership with Google Cloud, beIN will help drive the continued digital transformation of the sports, entertainment and media industry, both in Qatar and globally.”

Qatar Financial Centre chief executive Yousuf Mohamed al-Jaida said: “Our partnership with Google Cloud affirms our shared desire to facilitate the growth of local businesses by providing opportunities and solutions that

enable them to capitalise on the transformative benefits of technology and digitalisation.”

“Working with Google in this field builds up the support we provide our clients, particularly those in the financial services sector, and takes us steps forward in our mission to support the transformation of Qatar into a digital and fintech hub and the country’s sustainable development in line with the national development plan,” he said.

Ahmed al-Fahad, executive director



Gulf Times Editor-in-Chief Faisal al-Mudahka with Power International Holding marketing and communication manager Marwan Dimas and Trans Capital Finance chairman and chief executive Fadi Saab (right) at the launch of the Google Cloud Doha Region yesterday at the Qatar National Convention Centre (QNCC). PICTURES: Shaji Kayamkulam

of Technology & Network Operations at Al Jazeera Media Network, stated: “We are delighted to be among the group of companies leveraging Google Cloud’s new cloud region in Qatar.”

“The new region will help Al Jazeera positively impact and empower more customers and partners around the world,” he said. “Our collaboration with Google Cloud has helped us deliver tremendous value-added services to news readers around the globe.”

“We are able to capture and analyse how people engage with news in real-time and translate these insights into actions that help us keep the world better informed,” al-Fahad added. “We believe that with the cloud region now in Qatar, we are going to be strongly positioned to deliver exceptional news coverage and drive deeper engagement to all the information.”

Google Cloud Go-to-Market president Adaire Fox-Martin said: “We are proud to be delivering on the commitment we made in 2020 to the government of Qatar and the business community to open a cloud region in the country. The economy of Qatar holds tremendous growth potential.”

“The Doha cloud region will be a catalyst for economic development and will create more employment opportunities in the Qatar market as more businesses grow and expand with the power of cloud technologies,” she said. “We are also humbled by the presence of Qatar Cabinet ministers and leaders from Qatari businesses at the region launch event today, which reflects the endorsement of the new cloud regions’ potential.”

The new Doha region is part of Google Cloud’s global network of 37 regions and 112 zones that bring cloud services to over 200 countries and territories worldwide.

The new region brings high-performance, low-latency services and products to customers of all sizes, from public sector organisations to large enterprises and to small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and startups in Qatar and the Middle East.

Organisations in the region will benefit from key controls that allow them to maintain the highest security, data residency, and compliance standards, including specific data storage requirements.

NCSA, Google discuss co-operation

National Cyber Security Agency (NCSA) president engineer Abdulrahman bin Ali al-Farahid al-Maliki met Karan Bhatia, the head of Government Affairs and Public Policy at Google, on the sidelines of the launch of Google Cloud in Doha.

They discussed co-operation between the NCSA and Google, in addition to reviewing the agency’s role in making cyber policies in Qatar, and the importance of the projects and programmes it offers with the aim of enhancing cyber-security and providing a safe cyber environment in accordance with

the latest systems and international best practices in this field.

The two sides touched on a number of issues, including Google’s commitment to participate in the plans for digital and technological transformation in Qatar, and expanding its presence in a number of projects in Qatar and the region.

The meeting is part of the NCSA’s efforts to enhance and keep abreast of developments in cyber fields at the highest levels and with the best international practices in the field, in addition to strengthening



Al-Maliki with Bhatia.

partnerships with global cyber institutions, and building important new partnerships in order to reach a safe cyber environment in the country. – QNA

Indonesian musical makes global debut in Qatar

By Joey Aguilar
Staff Reporter

An Indonesian musical performance titled *Hayati: Panji Searching for the Essence of Love* made its international debut yesterday (May 22) at Katara – the Cultural Village in Qatar.

Qatar Museums (QM) Chairperson HE Sheikha Al Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani, Indonesia’s culture director-general Dr Hilmar Farid, Indonesian ambassador Ridwan Hassan and other dignitaries attended the opening night.

Directed by Rama Soeprapto, this specially commissioned production brings to life stories from Indonesian folklore, which hold a precious place as part of the world’s intangible heritage, as recognised by Unesco.

The performance, which concludes tomorrow (May 24), forms part of Qatar-Indonesia Year of Culture 2023.

The director told reporters that *Hayati* weaves a tale of love, self-discovery, and the true essence of life.

The central character, Panji, embarks on a quest to find his beloved Sekartaji, only to realise that in searching for love, he ultimately finds himself.

“While he is looking for Sekartaji, his love, he discovered that in looking for

love, he finally found himself”, which is what life is about, Soeprapto said.

Acclaimed Indonesian performers Achmad Dipoyono and Kadek Dewi Aryani star as main characters Panji and Sekartaji, respectively.

The production, Soeprapto noted, aims to evoke a deeper understanding of life’s meaning through “enchanting music, mesmerising dance, and thoughtful design”.

Bringing together a rich tapestry of sounds, the performance incorporates diverse musical instruments from across Indonesia.

Accompanied by enchanting melodies and synchronised movements, the dancers from Bali and Java showcase their skills and enthralled the audience.

In an interview, Soeprapto said that *Hayati* is a reflection of life itself.

Panji symbolises the essence of man while Sekartaji represents womanhood.

The tree, *Hayati*, embraces their journey, symbolising the universal essence of love.

“Hayati is the tree which embraces it. The essence of love is actually the essence of life,” he stressed.

Soeprapto emphasised that the performance transcends language barriers.

Soeprapto said he hopes that *Hayati* would serve as an ambassador of diplomacy, bridging cultural gaps and promoting understanding among people



from all corners of the world.

Highlighting the significance of the venue, Soeprapto noted that Katara is a beautiful space that sets the stage for meaningful connections and unity.

He added that the debut of *Hayati* in Qatar marks an important milestone, representing Indonesia’s first-ever series of performances to be showcased on an international platform.

He said that understanding and connecting with people is the key to falling in love with a culture.

Saying that if *Hayati* is embraced as an ambassador of unity and peace, Soeprapto expressed his enthusiasm for future opportunities to share this fascinating performance worldwide.



Scenes from the Indonesian musical *Hayati: Panji Searching for the Essence of Love*.



The monument, which depicts the official Doha - Arab Tourism Capital 2023 logo, is positioned in a photogenic location on the Corniche.

Official monument installed on Doha Corniche in recognition of Arab Tourism Capital 2023 title

Qatar Tourism (QT) has installed an official monument on the Doha Corniche in recognition of Doha’s landmark Arab Tourism Capital for 2023 title, which was awarded by the Arab Ministerial Council earlier this year.

The monument, which depicts the official Doha Arab Tourism Capital 2023 logo, is positioned in a photogenic location on the Corniche. The design of the monument was inspired by the slogan of the Doha Capital of Arab Tourism 2023, which reflects the city as a modern centre for tourism rooted in its rich cultural heritage.

Since Doha received the prestigious award, Qatar’s tourism sector has welcomed an incredible start to the year.

With more than 1mn visitors in the first quarter of 2023, Qatar registered its highest first quarter of international arrivals.

In April, Qatar Tourism announced the re-launch of the Hayya platform in its new form, inviting tourists who currently need a visa to Qatar to enjoy the country’s famously warm Arabian hospitality and diverse tourism offering.

The Hayya platform unifies the visa process for tourists and business visas to Qatar.

Universal meaning behind Hayati
“Hayati” means living, which encompasses a person’s journey through trials in the ultimate search for peace and love that enable deeper appreciation of life itself.
Originating in the East Javanese courts of the Kediri and Janggala kingdoms during the 12th century, the stories of Panji and Sekartaji were later adapted and transformed in other parts of Indonesia and the wider region.
The Panji story follows the adventures of Prince Raden Panji, who travels to various kingdoms in search of his beloved princess, Dewi Sekartaji. The story is often used to convey moral lessons and cultural values, such as the importance of loyalty, bravery, and perseverance.
The Sekartaji story, on the other hand, centres around the character of Dewi Sekartaji, who is said to possess unparalleled beauty.
The story explores themes of love, betrayal, and the struggle for power and control.
These stories were traditionally performed as *wayang* (shadow puppet) plays, accompanied by Javanese gamelan music.
Today, the central character is portrayed using

different masks throughout the performance. In Panji stories, a mask is a form of nonverbal communication that portrays the character and the personality of the central figure.
The character’s traits can be recognised through the shape of the eyes, nose, and mouth.
The character of Panji can be identified by the mask worn by the performer.
The design of the mask determines whether the performer is playing an antagonist, protagonist, animal character, and so on.
The colours of the mask also convey different meanings through five colours: red, white, yellow, green and black.
Red represents courage, white represents purity, yellow symbolises joy, green means gratitude, and black represents wisdom.

Music and design masters bring ancient stories to life

The play’s musical concept seeks to transport the audience to the Majapahit era (13th-16th centuries CE), the height of artistic expression in ancient Indonesia, by combining traditional Javanese and Balinese ensemble music.

Director Rama Soeprapto said: “There have been so many versions of Panji and Sekartaji and their story over the centuries. I wanted to create a simpler version with *Hayati: Panji Searching for the Essence of Love* that audiences can understand and connect with. It has been a welcome challenge.”
Producer Bayu Pontiaugust explained that *Hayati* is an original show.
“What I am trying to visualise within the production is how to maintain its origins from the classic Javanese and Balinese tradition, while imbuing it with a modern touch through musical and visual elements,” he said. “I want the audience to not only experience and understand the essence of the story, but also enjoy the choreography.”
Costumes for *Hayati* were designed by Era Soekanto, a household name in Indonesian fashion. Known for her batik designs, she often takes inspiration from the ancient Mataram and Majapahit kingdoms of Indonesia and has expressed her hope that the stories she is able to tell through her batik help others learn and understand their history.
“To me, the philosophy is like the tree of life,” she explained. “When the roots are stronger, the nation will grow stronger too.”